

## **Department of Agriculture**

### **Section 1: Highlights of Agency E-Government Activities**

#### **A. Enhanced Delivery of Information and Services to the Public - Sec. 202(g)**

*Section 202(g) of the E-Gov Act requires agencies to provide information on how electronic Government is used to improve performance in delivering programs to constituencies. In no more than 250 words, describe one IT agency activity or initiative that enhances the delivery of information and services to the public and others, or makes improvements in government operations. This example should highlight how electronic government improved the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of services provided by your agency.*

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the Office of Communication (OC) are leading the Open Data Policy (ODP) implementation and is guided through the Department's Digital Strategy Governance model, and utilizes existing organizations, teams and newly developed councils and working groups. These entities play a critical part in policy implementation.

USDA.gov uses best practices and usability standards, and has established internal web standards in addition to the Federal-wide standards set by OMB and GSA. USDA.gov's last redesign addressed user-experience issues by taking a task-centric approach to its information architecture and navigation.

USDA takes a task-centric approach to define our information architecture and improve the user experience. USDA.gov uses analytics tools such as Google Analytics and SiteImprove to identify our top tasks, combining those with metrics from all USDA Agencies and identifying trends. These trends are analyzed and incorporated into the user interface/user experience of the web site.

In FY15, USDA.gov plans to reevaluate its entire website and implement a redesign of the look and feel. USDA.gov is also migrating its' Portal environment to an open source solution that will open up silos within our Department and allow for more content and resource sharing.

#### **B. Public Access to Electronic Information - Sec. 207(f)(1)(B)**

*Section 207(f)(1)(B) of the E-Gov Act requires that agency websites assist public users to navigate agency websites, including the speed of retrieval of search results and the relevance of the results. Provide the updated URL(s) that contains your agency's customer service goals and describes activities that assist public users in providing improved access to agency websites and information, aid in the speed of retrieval and relevance of search results, and uses innovative technologies to improve customer service at lower costs. For example, include the URL to your agency's Customer Service Plan.*

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=DIGITALSTRATEGY">http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=DIGITALSTRATEGY</a>	Customer Service Plan located <a href="http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-customer-service-plan-nov2011.pdf">http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-customer-service-plan-nov2011.pdf</a>

## Section 2: Compliance with Goals and Provisions of the E-Gov Act

### A. Performance Integration - Sec. 202(b)

*The E-Gov Act requires agencies to develop performance metrics that demonstrate how electronic government supports agency objectives, strategic goals, and statutory mandates. In no more than 250 words, describe what performance metrics are used and tracked for IT investments and how these metrics support agency strategic goals and statutory mandates. Please discuss performance metrics that focus on customer service, agency productivity, innovative technology adoption and best practices. If applicable, include a description of your agency's evaluation model and how it is used. Provide applicable URL(s) for performance goals related to IT.*

The USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) through its Capital Planning & IT Governance Division (CPIGD) staff works closely with IT investment owners to emphasize alignment of the Secretary's Goals and Objectives and the Agency and Staff Office's business functions. The USDA IT Governance process integrates program management, capital planning, enterprise architecture, IT security, and budget formulation into a framework which enables critical decision making by the CIO and USDA executive boards throughout the IT investment life-cycle. USDA OCIO ensures that the interests of key IT investment stakeholders and partners are included at every step of the IT investment life-cycle by monitoring IT projects for the regular use of comprehensive and inclusive project charters that encourage stakeholder/customer involvement, and by emphasizing the use and management of key stakeholder and customer performance goals and measures in the ongoing execution of IT projects.

### B. Accessibility - Sec. 202(c) and (d)

*The E-Gov Act requires agencies to consider the impact of implementing policies on persons without access to the internet, and ensure accessibility to people with disabilities. Provide the URL(s) for your agency's website which describes actions taken by your agency in accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d).*

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.ocio.usda.gov/policy-directives-records-forms/section-508">http://www.ocio.usda.gov/policy-directives-records-forms/section-508</a> .	

### C. Government-Public Collaboration - Sec. 202(e)

*The E-Gov Act requires agencies to sponsor activities that use information technology to engage the public in the development and implementation of policies and programs. In no more than 250 words, describe one example of how your agency utilized technology to initiate government-public collaboration in the development and implementation of policies and programs.*

USDA.gov provides the majority of its public meetings on USDA.gov/live and our Department

YouTube channel, [youtube.com/usda](https://youtube.com/usda). An archive of our live streams is available and includes symposiums, town hall meetings, Google Hangouts, and other live events. USDA leverages a wide variety of digital broadcast tools and new technologies such as Google + Hangouts, and we house our own TV and Radio studios. [USDA.gov/newsroom](https://usda.gov/newsroom) has links to resources such as our radio and TV programming, and Streaming Media Archives. The Secretary's public schedule is also available on [USDA.gov](https://usda.gov). USDA also leverages various social media platforms to engage and receive public comments. Comments are received through the USDA blog, USDA Facebook page, Twitter, and other social engagement platforms. USDA also uses the IdeaJam platform for public ideation sessions and feedback.

[USDA.gov](https://usda.gov) plans to utilize our existing broadcast services through our Creative Media and Broadcast Center to share public events through TV and Radio programming. [USDA.gov/live](https://usda.gov/live) is the center of all of our streaming events including Google + Hangouts and national symposiums.

### **D. Credentialing - Sec. 203**

*The E-Gov Act seeks to achieve interoperable implementation of electronic signatures for appropriately secure electronic transactions with Government. In no more than 250 words, describe current activities your agency is undertaking to achieve the interoperable implementation of electronic credential authentication for transactions within the Federal Government and/or with the public (e.g. agency implementation of HSPD-12 and/or digital signatures).*

OCIO is participating in the pilot of the government-wide Connect.gov solution. As a solution provider for the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC), this service will provide a centralized interface between public citizens, government agencies and FICAM-approved credential providers. The objectives of this initiative are to reduce authentication costs while making it easier for public citizens to securely connect with USDA online services.

OCIO has implemented and released a software development kit that enables mobile applications to use USDA's eAuthentication Service. By standardizing authentication for mobile applications, this solution enables faster deployment of new mobile applications.

OCIO is working with the Department of Interior - Interior Business Center (IBC) and USDA National Finance Center (NFC) in pilots for ICAM-as-a-Service (ICAMaaS). USDA's ICAMaaS solution will enable federal agency customers of the NFC and IBC to use their own agency credentials to access NFC and IBC web-based HR and payroll applications via an E-Authentication service. This solution provides an improved user experience for NFC and IBC federal agency customers, promotes the use of PIV credentials across federal agency boundaries, reduces operating costs and simplifies security compliance.

### **E. USA.gov activities - Sec. 204 and Sec. 207(f)**

*In accordance with Section 204 of the E-Gov Act, [www.USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov) serves as an integrated internet-based system for providing the public with access to government information and services. In accordance with Section 207(f)(3), provide the URL(s) your agency's*

activities on [www.USA.gov](http://www.USA.gov).

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/Executive/Agriculture.shtml">http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/Executive/Agriculture.shtml</a>	

## **F. eRulemaking - Sec. 206**

*The E-Gov Act seeks to assist the public, including the regulated community, in electronically submitting information to agencies under Federal requirements, by reducing the burden of duplicate collection and ensuring the accuracy of submitted information. In no more than 250 words, provide a description of your agency's use of online electronic regulatory submission capabilities, specifically the usage of [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov) and the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS).*

E-Rulemaking has simplified the public's participation in USDA's rulemaking process by making regulatory information more accessible on Regulations.gov. USDA also benefits from the cost savings associated with not needing to develop and operate duplicative agency-specific electronic systems.

In FY14, USDA posted 296 rules and proposed rules, 866 Federal Register notices, and 47,590 public submissions via Regulations.gov. Overall, USDA provides the public access to 345,787 documents in Regulations.gov.

The eRulemaking Program also offers a streamlined internal rulemaking business process through agency access to FDMS.gov. USDA had 264 staff using FDMS.gov in FY14, and created 128 regulatory dockets in FDMS for regulatory actions published in FY14.

## **G. National Archives Records Administration (NARA) Recordkeeping - Sec. 207(d-e)**

*The E-Gov Act requires agencies to adopt policies and procedures to ensure that chapters 21, 25, 27, 29, and 31 of title 44, United States Code, are applied effectively and comprehensively to Government information on the Internet and to other electronic records. In no more than 250 words, describe your agency's adherence to NARA recordkeeping policies and procedures for electronic information online and other electronic records. Additionally, please indicate the number of electronic records that have been scheduled with NARA and any pending scheduling for electronic systems at your agency.*

The USDA has well-established processes and procedures to ensure the proper management, scheduling, and disposition of USDA records at <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/policy-directives-records-forms/records-management> (protected by USDA's eAuthentication Service). The USDA's Records Management Officer leads the department-wide effort to comply with the detailed requirements of NARA Bulletin 2006-002, "NARA Guidance for Implementing Section 207(e) of the E-Government Act of 2002" and the requirements of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Circular A-130.

The USDA records management staff members continually identify electronic information systems containing records and revise the agency's records schedules as appropriate. USDA submitted 201 schedules for electronic information systems associated with the 216 major and non-major IT investments in its IT portfolio, by the end of FY14. NARA has approved 198 of those schedules and 3 schedules are pending NARA's review.

#### **H. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) - Sec. 207(f)(A)(ii)**

*The E-Gov Act requires agency websites to include direct links to information made available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act. Provide the updated URL for your agency's primary FOIA website.*

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/">http://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/</a>	

#### **I. Information Resources Management (IRM) Strategic Plan - Sec. 207(f)(A)(iv)**

*The E-Gov Act requires agency websites to include the strategic plan of the agency developed under section 306 of title 5, US Code. Provide the updated URL to your agency's IRM Strategic Plan. This plan should encompass activities in FY14. If your agency does not have an updated plan, please provide the URL to the most recent plan and indicate when an updated plan will be available.*

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.ocio.usda.gov/strategic-plan">http://www.ocio.usda.gov/strategic-plan</a>	

#### **J. Research and Development (R&D) - Sec. 207(g)**

*If your agency funds R&D activities, provide the updated URL(s) for publicly accessible information related to those activities, and specify whether or not each website provides the public information about Federally funded R&D activities and/or the results of the Federal research.*

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.nal.usda.gov/research-and-technology/research-and-development">http://www.nal.usda.gov/research-and-technology/research-and-development</a>	Yes. This website provides public information about R/D activities and/or the results of the Federal Research.
<a href="http://www.fs.fed.us/research/">http://www.fs.fed.us/research/</a>	Yes. This website provides public information about R/D activities and/or the results of the Federal Research.
<a href="http://cris.nifa.usda.gov/">http://cris.nifa.usda.gov/</a>	Yes. This website provides public information about R/D activities

Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
	and/or the results of the Federal Research.

## **K. Privacy Policy and Privacy Impact Assessments - Sec. 208(b)**

*The E-Gov Act requires agencies to conduct a privacy impact assessment; ensure the review of the privacy impact assessment by the Chief Information Officer, or equivalent official, as determined by the head of the agency; and if practicable, after completion of the review under clause, make the privacy impact assessment publicly available through the website of the agency, publication in the Federal Register, or other means. In no more than 250 words, describe your agency's adherence to this provision, including adherence to OMB's guidance pertaining to the use of IT to collect, maintain, or disseminate identifiable information, or when new systems are procured for this purpose. In addition, describe your agency's process for performing and updating privacy impact assessments for IT.*

USDA adheres to OMB guidance regarding the collection, maintenance, and dissemination of personally identifiable information. In FY14, USDA continued its social security number (SSN)/tax payer identification number (TIN) elimination, encryption, masking effort by reaching out to USDA agencies that for FY13 were still reconciling their inventory. In FY13, the Department saw a reduction in the number of systems that contain SSN/TIN. There was also a reduction of 11% in the number of systems eliminating, and masking of SSN/TIN. In FY14, the Department took a holistic approach to reviewing agency SSN/TIN reporting by combining the review of the SSN/TIN holding report with privacy documentation reviews.

The Privacy Office leads two subcommittees to address key Privacy issues. The first is the USDA National Institute of Standards and Technology's Special Publication 800-53 Revision 4, Appendix J Privacy Controls subcommittee. The USDA Privacy subcommittee is working with the Department's Privacy Office to identify privacy controls that can be implemented in FY14. The Privacy Office understands that the NIST 800-53 Rev 4 Appendix J controls will not be available in USDA's Cyber Security Assessment Tool until FY15.

The Privacy Office migrated their webpage as part of the Intranet initiative, to a different platform to save the agency money on the escalating maintenance expense. This move also helped to stimulate more interest and activity with our collaboration tools, e.g. USDA Connect – Privacy Community and SharePoint. USDA Connect – Privacy Community, we've had several forum discussions and feedback from the agencies, further strengthening our relationships and improving privacy posture.

The Privacy Office also updated the Privacy Threshold Analysis (PTA) and deployed it in FY14.

## **K2. Privacy Policy and Privacy Impact Assessment Links - Sec. 208(b)**

*In addition to the narrative provided above in section K., provide the updated URL(s) for your agency's privacy policy and the website where your agency's privacy impact assessments are available.*



Public Facing Agency URL(s)	Brief Explanation (if necessary)
<a href="http://www.ocio.usda.gov/about-ocio/policy-and-directives-pd/privacy-office">http://www.ocio.usda.gov/about-ocio/policy-and-directives-pd/privacy-office</a>	

### **M. Agency IT Training Programs - Sec. 209(b)(2)**

*The E-Gov Act calls for agencies to establish and operate information technology training programs. The act states that such programs shall have curricula covering a broad range of information technology disciplines corresponding to the specific information technology and information resource management needs of the agency involved; be developed and applied according to rigorous standards; and be designed to maximize efficiency, through the use of self-paced courses, online courses, on-the-job training, and the use of remote instructors, wherever such features can be applied without reducing the effectiveness of the training or negatively impacting academic standards. In no more than 250 words, describe your agency's IT training program, privacy training program, cross-agency development programs, and competencies reviews for IT workforce.*

USDA has established a certification framework called Program and Project Managers Training and Certification (PPMTC) Program. This is based on the recent federal working groups and leading industry companies' collaboration of the newly revised Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-PPM) Policy and Guidance that includes the newly Core-plus specialization for IT Program and Project Managers. The USDA's Program and Project Managers Policy is in draft and should be implemented in the very near future.

We continue to align the USDA'S PPMTC Program with OPM Competency Model for IT Program Management. USDA is centralizing the selection process, the enrollment process and the approval of certification process for those existing and future Program and Project Managers who meet the applicable criteria.

The prerequisite for all potential and current IT Program Managers to complete the Enterprise Governance Process course still remains as well as the mandatory requirement for all new and existing major IT investments to go through the USDA CIO'S Enterprise IT Governance Process stage gates in order to ensure the health of each investment is given the proper oversight as well as successfully meeting their milestones within scope, schedule and budget.